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ABSTRACT

This paper explores Samuel Adam's role as perhaps the most important propagandist of the American Revolution and his efforts to exploit Great Britain's mistakes and to engender in the American colonists a love of liberty and a fear that Great Britain, if not resisted, would replace that liberty with tyranny. Suggesting that the Revolutionary War began in Massachusetts because of Adam's efforts to agitate and provoke incidents, this paper profiles Adam's life, stressing his boyhood conviction that the British were responsible for his family's financial misfortunes and his early devotion to political writing. His roles in developing a large group of loyal followers, in becoming a revolutionary leader, in serving in and guiding the Massachusetts Assembly, and in disseminating propaganda that led to the Boston Massacre are chronicled. Adam's continued leadership and involvement in events that led to the Boston Tea Party and his roles in the Continental Congresses are highlighted. Eight references are included. (JHP)

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PROPAGANDIST OF THE REVOLUTION

Samuel Adams

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PROPAGANDIST OF THE REVOLUTION

By defeating both Spain and France in the Seven Years' War, England added to her already expansive empire a large part of the North American continent. Most British citizens believed she was then the most powerful nation in the world. Most American colonists felt both physically and economically secure as citizens of the powerful British Empire. Many were happy and proud to be the subjects of King George III. Even James Otis, a future revolutionary voice, exuberated "What God in his providence has united, let no man dare to put asunder."

Yet only a few short years later, those same colonists declared their complete independence of Britain and in doing so asserted they were also ready and able to defeat her mighty armed forces. Historians have argued persuasively that this abrupt shift in colonial opinion was brought about by Britain's stupid errors of judgment in its treatment of the colonists. But it seems reasonable that in addition there must have been some very able exploitation of Britain's mistakes to generate the strong emotional surge necessary to ignite the flame of independence which swept through the colonies and to convert the colonists' contentment with dependence into a stubborn and militant demand for independence.

I suggest that in large measure this necessary emotional surge was generated by the words and deeds of three extraordinarily gifted patriots, each applying his singularly powerful talent to engender that necessary emotional force: by Patrick Henry pouring forth his patriotic emotion evoking oratory on the most timely occasions; by Thomas Paine unselfishly publishing his universally appealing and easily understood revolutionary prose so destructive of reverence for Britain and particularly for the Crown; and by Samuel Adams, the supreme propagandist of the revolution, exploiting Britain's mistakes and manipulating facts and men to engender love of liberty and a fear that Britain, if not resisted, would replace that liberty with tyranny.

Of the three in my opinion the work of Samuel Adams might very well have been the most important. It was not just a happenstance that the war started in Massachusetts. It happened there because Samuel Adams caused it to happen there where he had been agitating and provoking incidents to ignite it for years. In fact, all his energies had been so dedicated to that purpose to the neglect of all others that it was only because his second wife was exceptionally understanding and resourceful that Sam's family was able to survive.

Adams was deeply religious and always a true Puritan. He rarely had enough money to live on; he always dressed poorly

and looked with scorn on the finery of the wealthy Bostonians. He was concerned that their devotion to acquiring things to satisfy their vulgar taste would result in the loss of things of lasting value, especially their liberty. All his writings contained a religious fervor and religious flavor. But paradoxically he was also always willing to be guided by his declared principle, the key to understanding his political activities: "In political matters the public good is above all other considerations and every rule of morality, when in competition with it, may very well be dispensed with."

Sam's father had at one time been a prosperous businessman. Although he made his money from a winery and brewery, he was a deacon in the Congregationalist Church and was very well-respected socially. In fact at that time Sam's branch of the Adams family, the city Adamses, had greater status than that of his cousin John, the country Adamses. Consistent with the mores of the period, Harvard College at that time ranked its students not by academic achievement but by social position. It assigned Sam fifth place in his class while poor John had to swallow his Adams' pride and accept a rank of sixteenth in his. Sam received his bachelor's degree in 1740 and a Masters Degree in 1743. His future political views were reflected in the title to his master's thesis,

"Whether It Be Lawful to Resist the Supreme Magistrate if the Commonwealth Cannot Be Otherwise Preserved."

When a land bank organized by Deacon Adams and some other Bostonians failed, the directors were held liable for all the debts of the bank. This brought financial disaster to Sam Adams' family. The Deacon taught young Sam that the British Parliament was solely responsible for the family's financial misfortune and that it was equally responsible for an enormous amount of other injustice in the world. From this and his own observations of Britain's machinations Sam acquired a deep distrust for the British government and ultimately the conviction that if the colonies did not take action to prevent it, Britain would certainly rob them of their liberty. Eschewing almost completely all other interests and activities, Sam devoted all his thoughts and energies to precipitating that action.

For the first twenty years of his adult life Sam was singularly undistinguished. Barely supporting himself and family by holding one minor political job after another, his real work to which he devoted almost all his thought and energy was (1) his political writings and (2) the building of his political constituency.

Throughout this period he was a prolific writer for the Independent Advertiser and other magazines which he filled with Locke's natural rights philosophy and anti-British propaganda. As early as December, 1772, he wrote: "Among the natural rights of the Colonists are these: First, a right to life; Secondly, to Liberty; and Thirdly, to property". Governor Bernard, who was repeatedly the object of his invectives and who detested him, was forced to admit: "long practice caused him (Adams) to arrive at great perfection, and to acquire a talent of artfully and fallaciously insinuating into the minds of his readers a prejudice against the character of all whom he attacked, beyond any other man I ever knew."

Sam knew as well as, if not better than, anyone that political decisions in all New England, and particularly in Massachusetts, were made at town meetings, and whoever had control over the meetings could control the political decisions.

Probably for that reason, although he was always well accepted by the socially important Bostonians, Sam spent most of his time with ship workers, wharfingers, caulkers, and others of the laboring class. He socialized with them in taverns and at all the town meetings. He also joined and was active in many organizations including the Caucus Club of which

the Deacon had been an organizer. Originally a group of caulkers, under Sam's leadership it became the political power in Boston. Interestingly, the name of this club was probably the origin of the word caucus. Applying his extraordinarily astute political acumen, Sam gradually developed a large group of loyal, dedicated followers to whom he had transferred his profound distrust of Britain and his strong belief in the natural rights of all men.

Boston at that time was a village of perhaps 18,000. While a majority of them felt kindly toward Britain, they also felt Britain should shoulder its burdens resulting from the war just as the colonists had sustained the burden of furnishing men and supplies themselves.

Britain now had a distinctly contrary view. Convinced that Britain had fought and paid for the very expensive French and Indian War in no small measure for the benefit of the Colonies, and particularly for New England, their new Prime Minister, Grenville, believed that it was only fair that the prosperous, as he viewed them, Colonies should pay for having had the benefits of Britain's protection. While Britain had imposed taxes on the Colonies for years, they had been either ignored completely or substantially avoided by smuggling, all of which had been tolerated by the British authorities. Now the custom

authorities were told to enforce vigorously the new tax on molasses, the principal item in colonial commerce, and they were for the first time given the aid of Writs of Assistance issued without the requirement of showing cause, which permitted them at will to enter houses, ships and other places to search for contraband. Additionally oppressive, trials of those accused of non-payment were held not in colonial common law courts with juries but in Admiralty courts in far off Halifax without juries.

This was the all-important turning point in Sam's life. Although he was then 42 years old and had always been considered a minor politician who wrote abstract political articles, within two years he had become recognized here and in England as the most important leader of the American revolution in Massachusetts.

His friend James Otis, the younger, resigned his government lawyer position in order to represent the Boston merchants in resisting the tax. He and Sam then ran for and were elected to the Massachusetts Assembly and were promptly appointed to important committees. Otis became the oral spokesman and Adams the propagandist for the Country Party in opposition to the Court Party controlled by appointees of the Crown and other Tories.

At that time the Governor, Bernard, the Lt. Governor, Hutchinson, and members of the powerful Council, all of whom were appointed by the King, held the real political power in Massachusetts. Otis and Adams laid down the gauntlet to Hutchinson and Bernard to cooperate with them or they would be driven from office, a fate Adams ultimately brought about when they refused to capitulate.

Applying his talents, Sam learned how easy it was to manufacture public opinion and convert it to political power. His usual modus operandi was to condition the minds of his followers and others through political argument repeated again and again in his newspaper and magazine articles. Then at a propitious time he would call a town meeting, which was always dominated by his followers, where demands upon the government as dictated by Sam were adopted. Sam, together with a large crowd of citizens, mostly his loyal followers, would then call upon Hutchinson or Bernard, and present the "peoples demands" agreed upon in their town meeting. That many of the meetings had no authenticity but were mere rump sessions called by Sam seemed to destroy none of the power Sam was able to wield in this fashion.

As frequently happens with those who are able to achieve success quickly, Sam and his radicals pressed the citizens to

take actions they were not yet reqady to take. As a result they lost control of the Legislature and opposition to the molasses tax almost disappeared.

If Grenville's policy of making the Colonists help pay for the French and Indian War had then been dropped Sam Adams would never have been known in history. But in 1765 Grenville secured the enactment of the infamous Stamp Act by which he believed he had devised the perfect vehicle to make certain the Colonists would no longer escape paying British taxes, since no transaction and little else could take place without the appropriate stamps being purchased. The Act not only affected every citizen regardless of class or occupation but it had to be paid in species, draining scarce money from the country. This unwise act fell heavily upon, and therefore provoked a strong resistance from, the wealthy and influential thereby elevating and widening the popularity of Otis and Adams to new dimensions. Units of the Sons of Liberty sprang up all over New England.

After the Stamp Act began to be enforced, a mob assembled in Boston, hung in effigy Oliver, the stamp collector, who was also Hutchinson's brother-in-law. They also entered his house, forced him to come before the Liberty Tree, an Adams created symbol, and swear he would never enforce the Stamp Act.

Encouraged by wine, perhaps furnished by the Adams winery, they then proceeded to Hutchinson's beautiful home, ransacked and burned it, destroying many treasures including Hutchinson's history of the Commonwealth. It was then said that Boston was being controlled by a mob and Sam Adams was its keeper. Although Sam probably approved of and could have even engineered this show of force as part of his overall strategy, having accomplished his purpose he then, consistent with his puritan ethics, sponsored and secured passage of legislation to reimburse Hutchinson for his loss. According to Governor Bernard, Sam had suddenly "become the single most powerful man in the colony".

Undoubtedly as a reaction to the Stamp Act the Whigs in Massachusetts won the election of 1766. Otis became the Speaker of the House and Adams the Clerk of the House. The members of the powerful Council which by law were now elected by the House was therefore controlled by the Country Party.

Adams caused a gallery to be installed in the assembly hall which he regularly filled with what were popularly called "Mohawks" who by their unruly behavior were able to intimidate any Tory who attempted to speak on the floor. Sam, the master propagandist, was able to make every expression by the Crown or its appointees appear as a vicious and unprovoked attack on the

colonists, and particularly on Bostonians. At this time Governor Bernard was known to say "Every dip of Adams' pen stung like a horned snake". George Sand, when she became Minister of Propaganda for the French Republic and used Adams as her model, said he was "the most persuasive user of the written word for political purposes in all history".

Activities such as the above in Boston and a precipitous drop in British trade put tremendous pressure on an ambivalent Parliament who were faced on the one hand by merchants and Whigs demanding a repeal of the Stamp Act and on the other hand by conservatives demanding that Britain must insist on her sovereign rights to govern the colonies including the right to tax them. Attempting to placate both camps, Pitt recommended and secured the repeal of the Stamp Act but accompanied it with the passage of a Declaratory Act, which reasserted Parliament's complete supremacy over the colonies "in all cases whatsoever". Sam argued the latter was clear evidence of Britain's intent to deprive the colonists of all liberty. It became just another red flag with which Sam could enrage his followers.

Even more useful for Sam's propaganda machine Townshend, an arrogant new Chancellor of the Exchequer, boasted to Parliament that while others had failed in the attempt he knew how to make

the Americans pay British taxes and he would do it. He reasoned that perhaps the Colonies had made a proper distinction between internal taxes and external taxes and conceded that Parliament might very well not have the right to impose the former. On the theory he had thus mollified the Americans he caused the Townshend Act of 1767 to be enacted, which imposed taxes on certain commodities which the Americans were forced to import from England. The taxes were to be applied upon entry to America so the consumers did not pay directly. The Act provided for Commissioners to collect the tax and Writs of Assistance to aid them in forcing payment, all with headquarters in Boston. A significant factor, the income from such taxes was to be used exclusively to pay for Colonial Judges and Governors.

Adams' response was that this was not only taxation without representation, taking money out of the Colonists pockets, but it meant the colonists would no longer have any control of those who were their Judges, which free men could not tolerate. Further, he argued, additional taxes would constantly be added, the original tax being merely the entering wedge.

Under Adams' goading and guidance, the Massachusetts Assembly adopted what was called a Circular Letter to be sent,

and he hoped adopted, by the other colonies declaring that while Britain had a right to levy external taxes for the purpose of regulating trade it had no power to levy such taxes solely for the purpose of collecting revenue. Following a very calculating plan, Sam was taking the people as fast as they would go, but step by step he was inexorably leading them to a declaration of independence. Hillsborough, the new Colonial Secretary, ordered the Massachusetts Assembly to rescind their action and threatened it with dissolution if it didn't and also declared that any other State Assembly adopting Massachusetts' Circular Letter would also be dissolved. Just the opposite of his intent this resulted in greater colonial unity resulting in other colonies responding enthusiastically to the Adams' call to adopt the Circular Letter.

Sam kept the temperature of his constituency constantly at a high point. He could either restrain them or bring them into action with his words. But on April 10, 1768, the inevitable happened; they went farther than he desired. They became so enthusiastic they ran the Commissioner of Customs out of town bringing an end to the collection of all taxes. Britain's reaction to this demonstration of force toward the King's representative was to order two regiments of British regulars into Boston, obviously to control future acts of violence by Sam's mob. Up to this time, at least in public, Sam had always

been peaceful in his speech and actions. Now, however, he exhorted his constituency to take up arms and defeat the redcoats before they took over the City of Boston.

But when an illegal citizens convention met on September 22, 1768, it failed to support him in his insistance that the British soldiers' entry into Boston should be resisted with armed force. Pusilanimously he thought they would only approve still one more petition to the King most respectfully declaring their grievances.

Governor Bernard recognized the hard reality that Adams, the propagandist, not Bernard, the Governer, was now the real political power in Massachusetts. Completely defeated by Sam, he requested recall which was granted fulfilling part of Sam's earlier threat.

The British guards now controlled the city of Boston and all travel to and from the city. Britain sent out the word that anyone charged with treason, and that meant Sam more than anyone else, would be tried in England and not in American courts. This threat had no effect on Sam. He filled the newspapers and magazines with lurid descriptions of "British atrocities", which were either grossly exaggerated reports of actual events or complete creations of Sam's imagination. He

made his readers believe that the British soldiers daily and repeatedly beat up on small boys, raped Boston ladies of all ages, and performed other atrocities on Bostonians of all classes, all of which added to the pressure he was building up in Boston and all of which led directly to the Boston Massacre.

Because the true facts probably never were known, there are many versions of that historic event. One version which may not be too far from accurate is that in March 1770, after several days of fighting precipitated by boys pelting a sentry with snowballs, a mob appeared, led by Samuel Gray, ropewalker; Crispus Attucks, a huge mulatto; James Caldwell, shipsmate; and Patrick Carr, Irish riotor, causing the sentry to call for help. The main guard, headed by a Captain Preston, responded. One soldier who had been attacked by a citizen apparently fired his gun. Immediately other soldiers fired. Five civilians were killed or mortally wounded. Adams called for a meeting the next day in Faneuil Hall, where he gave a fiery speech making all those who were killed or wounded appear as heroic patriotic martyrs. He then led the assembly to Hutchinson, who had now succeeded Bernard as Governor, where he demanded that Hutchinson remove all soldiers from the city, making the threat, which he probably could not fulfill, that if this was not done and done promptly there were 15,000 men from the country ready to enter Boston for revenge. After

considerable argument in which Adams outfoxed Hutchinson, the latter completely capitulated and agreed that all the troops would be removed to Castle William in the Boston Harbor.

Adams then had himself and a few of his friends appointed to a committee to make an investigation of the incident. The committee with no other authority proceeded to take statements from every possible witness, thus making certain it would be difficult to ever really learn the true facts. The commission concluded, with Sam's help and without foundation, that the whole tragedy had been initiated by guns used by the hated custom officers in conspiracy with the British troops. Knowing that a delay of the trial would permit a cooling of the tempers and probably the acquittal of the soldiers, Adams unsuccessfully demanded an immediate trial. Six months later, after 38 witnesses had testified it appeared that there had been a civilian plot to attack the soldiers, which rather definitely established the townspeople as the agressors. As a result of the excellent advocacy of cousin John, Preston was acquitted, but two soldiers were found guilty of manslaughter, their punishment to be mitigated to burning on the hand after they pleaded with their clergy. The other defendant, the custom house officer, was also acquitted.

Sam completely ignored the results of the trial and proceeded to convict the soldiers in his writings published in the Boston Gazette using, not the facts which came out at the trial, but the facts from the statements which he and his committee had taken ex parte. When one defendant made a deathbed confession that the townspeople were the real aggressors, Adams explained that he was just a Papist and therefore couldn't be believed. Thereafter with annual memorials and other stratagems Adams saw to it that the citizens were regularly reminded of and never permitted to forget what he called the "bloody work in King Street".

He now organized military exercises for patriots on the Boston Common. To hit Britain where it hurt economically he also originated what he called a Non-Importation Agreement hoping to get the cooperation of all of the colonies in a complete boycott of British goods. But this permitted merchants sympathetic to the Tory cause to profit at the expense of the patriot merchants. This, plus the repeal of the Townshend duties except for tea, temporarily robbed Sam of his steam but did not diminish his zeal for the cause.

At this point it was said that Otis suffered from "curtain lectures" by his Tory wife. In any event he recanted radical positions he had taken earlier. He also seemed to be gradually

becoming insane, leaving no one to contest Adams' leadership of the Whig or Country Party. Through crafty wooing by Sam, the vain but wealthy John Hancock was given a place in the party leadership in return for his very substantial financial support but Sam remained the brains and the leader.

To avoid the jeers and shouts of the "Mohawks" from Sam's balcony, the Crown announced that the Assembly would henceforth have to meet in Cambridge, not Boston. Adams declared that any such royal declaration as that, if it injured the people, and it clearly did, could not be binding. Any recognition that royal instructions constituted law the colonists had to obey was tyranny. No matter what the Crown did Adams asserted it was tyranny, but this time he had gone too far. Both Otis and Hancock, each of whom was at that time wooing the Crown, opposed him. About this time many Whigs became Tories and even cousin John himself retired to Braintree, symptomatic of what was occuring every place in the Colonies except in the mind and heart of Sam Adams, who never lost his fervor for the cause.

Whenever the revolutionary spirit waned, it did seem that Britain could be relied upon to hand Sam still another propaganda weapon to remind the citizens of British "tyranny". This time it was Britain's announcement that the salaries of American Judges would henceforth be paid by Britain. In his

free-wheeling rhetoric Sam demonstrated how this would result in the loss of all control over the courts by the colonists who would then face, in Sam's ubiquitous words, "abject slavery". He used the citizens' reaction which he had generated to that move by Britain, over the opposition of Hancock and other Whigs, to organize the Massachusetts Committees of Correspondence to furnish the media for the exchange of radical thought and action. Three hundred towns in Massachusetts alone organized such a committee. When similar committees were organized throughout the other colonies, the Whig Party became revitalized and probably led to the idea of a Continental Congress.

At this point Franklin somehow fell into the possession of correspondence between Hutchinson and the British government. He permitted a few Patriots to read the documents but only after each had made a commitment that neither their source nor their contents would be publicly divulged. Adams got Hancock, who had been furnished with copies, to assert that he had received them from a source other than Franklin and therefore they were subject to no restriction.

Purportedly using Hancock's copies, Sam in his writings then used Hutchinson's revealing statements artfully embellished by Adamese, to pillory Hutchinson. For example,

one Hutchinson statement, "There must be an abridgement of what is called English liberty in the Colonies" Sam asserted was proof positive of his repeated warnings that Britain's basic purpose at all times was to strip the colonists of all liberty. He used Hutchinson's statements to imply that Hutchinson was responsible for the Stamp Act, the Townshend Duties and the Boston Massacre, and even for bringing the British troops to Boston. Hutchinson's statements and Adam's chicanery revived the revolutionary spirit which led to the Boston Tea Party.

Reading events in Europe, Adams was convinced that England would soon again be occupied at war in Europe and therefore it was a propitious time to precipitate a real confrontation with British authority. The Tea Act, passed in May, 1773, was an adequate weapon in Sam's capable hands for this purpose. Enacted to extricate the India Company from financial difficulty, it was not particularly offensive. If enforced Americans could have bought tea for less money than English people had to pay. But it gave the Indian company a monopoly on the sale of tea in America, raising fears that it was only a precursor of other monopolies resulting in a loss of American trade. Plus, it was another declaration of the British Parliament's right to tax the colonies. That was enough for Adams. He started beating the drums. His radical publications

declared the tea must not be allowed to land in America even if that meant the use of force. On October 23, 1773, he persuaded the Caucus Club to resolve they "would oppose with their lives and fortunes the landing of any tea" sent by the East India Company. On November 2, 1773 the Boston Committee of Correspondence "Voted that the tea . . . shall not be landed".

Again employing his usual and very effective weapon, Adams called a Town Meeting for November 5, 1773, where resolves written by him were adopted that since the tea tax had been levied without the consent of the people it was a nullity, it introduced arbitrary government and slavery and must be resisted by Bostonians "by all means in their power".

Although he realized any vestige of his prestige had been destroyed by Sam's adroit use of his letters and although he personally believed the tea tax should have been repealed with the other Townshend duties, Hutchinson was determined to make a desperate effort to make Americans pay the tax. The fact that some of the tea was consigned to Hutchinson's sons and some of his friends was enough for Sam to declare Hutchinson favored the tax because he stood to profit from the monopoly personally. In spite of threats from the Sons of Liberty, the Boston tea merchants refused to capitulate to Sam's demands that the tea must be sent back to England. They would promise

only to store the tea until further advice was received from England. In contrast the New York and Philadelphia consignees wilted under pressure from their respective Sons of Liberty, causing Sam to exhort his troops that Boston's "credit is at stake, we must venture, and unless we do, we shall be discarded by the Sons of Liberty". He insisted the tea must be returned to England. He was confident if it were allowed to land the tea would gradually find its way into the country which he wanted desperately to avoid.

British law provided that if the ships entered the Boston harbor proper the tea could not be sent back to England in the same ships without a pass from the governor certifying all taxes had been paid. If the tea was returned to England as Sam demanded and no tax had been paid all the tea could and probably would be confiscated by the British government bringing financial ruin to Hutchinson's friends and relatives, the consignees. However, both Hutchinson and Sam also knew that under British law if the ships were turned back before they had passed a certain point at the harbor's entry the tax would not have been incurred. To avoid a crisis Hutchinson therefore ordered the ships to dock before passing the magic line at the entry of the harbor. Hearing of this, Sam caused the captains to be haled before the Boston Committee of Correspondence where they were ordered to bring the ships into

the harbor proper which swarmed with Sons of Liberty, or be tarred and feathered. Faced with this ultimatum, the captains supinely brought the ships in as Sam demanded.

The deadlock Sam had planned then existed. The tea was now subject to the tax which had to be paid by December 17, 1773, or it would be subject to seizure in Boston for non-payment. Sam therefor called his town meeting for December 16, just one day before the deadline. When it was publicly reported at that meeting that Hutchinson still refused to give the clearance, allowing the tea to go back to England, Sam announced "this meeting can do nothing further to save the country". With that signal his Mohawks, all ready camouflaged with their Indian make-up, within three hours dumped 342 chests of fine tea into the Boston harbor. Obviously this constituted an extreme and public act of defiance and insult to the British government which Britain could not ignore. It accomplished just what Sam Adams wanted. George III wrote to Lord North "The die is now cast. The Colonists must either submit or triumph".

The first of Britain's Coercive Acts was to close the port at Boston to all commerce and transfer the customs house and seat of government to Salem until all the tea had been paid for. This in effect cut Boston's life line because it was wholly dependent upon its port traffic. Following his now

perfected procedure, Sam called a town meeting for May 13, 1774. There, at his urging, his followers adopted a comprehensive non-intercourse agreement cutting off all trade with Britian. Following Boston's lead, similar agreements were adopted throughout Massachusetts. However, while sympathetic with Boston, merchants in other states, and even a few in Boston itself, refused to give Adams the support he had hoped for. But his action did increase the demand for a Continental Congress to which Adams was named as one of five delegates.

Adams' friends, knowing the clothes he wore were ragged and aware of how financially destitute he and his family had become as a result of his devoting all his energies to the cause for so many years, now insisted on buying for him presentable clothing for his appearance as a delegate at the Congress. They also insisted on building him a new barn and repairing his house.

Cautiously applying at the Congress the strategic skills he had learned through the years in Boston, Sam secured adoption of the Suffolk Resolves. The leader of conservatives who had vainly fought against Adams' machinations reported,

> "Adams and his crew . . . juggled the whole conclave". "He eats little, drinks little, sleeps little, thinks much, and is most decisive and indefatibable in pursuit of his objects . . . It

was this man, who by his superior application managed 'to get everything he and his radical crowd wanted, including: closing the Boston port was illegal, judges paid by British money were unconstitutional, colonists were to commence military drill, the defeat of the conservative plan of organization of the Congress and the adoption of their own and a blacklisting of any who continued to deal commercially with England."

Additional Coercive Acts enacted by Parliament were in North's words "to take all executive power from the hands of the democratic part of the (Massachusetts) government", no town meetings, the Council henceforth to be appointed by the King, certain cases (treason) to be tried either in another colony or in Great Britain and Gage, a military man, to replace Hutchinson as Governor, which completely fulfilled Sam's earlier threat. After these coercive measures, music to Sam's ears, all ties were broken and a revolutionary government began in full operation in Massachusetts.

It had always been Adams' plan to force the British to be the first to resort to military force and some believe he succeeded. In early 1775 Gage had received orders to take both Adams and Hancock into British custody. He also had been waiting for a propitious time to capture the patriots' mililtary stores at Concord. On April 18 Gage knew that Adams and Hancock were temporarily staying in Lexington but were about to leave for the Second Continental Congress. His men

were given the fateful order to march out of Boston and capture both the stores and the two men.

As every school boy and girl know, because of Paul Revere's midnight ride the minute men were ready. (Because he was not mentioned in Longfellow's famous poem, the ride of Will Dawes is not as well known.) The forewarned Adams and Hancock escaped and the shot heard around the world was fired. The revolution which Sam had devoted his life to provoke had started and he was heard to say "What a glorious morning it is".

Recognizing that Sam Adams had been the pre-eminent leader in the movement toward colonial independence, at the Second Continental Congress his admirers suggested that he should be the one to introduce the fateful resolution calling for independence. With his usual wisdom and modesty he declined, saying that because his views were so well known it would be better if the action were initiated by someone from Virginia like Richard Henry Lee. His advice was followed. When Mr. Lee offered the resolution on June 7, 1776, the conservatives, in a desperate attempt to defeat it called for and won a delay of action on the resolution for a period of three weeks. But Sam was not to be defeated. Because he was confident that when the Congress had before it the actual text of such a declaration it would surely be approved, he promptly moved that a committee be

appointed to draft the document in order that it would be ready for final action if the Congress so determined. The motion carried, the well known amd prestigious committee was appointed and after the three weeks' delay, just as Sam knew would happen when he made his motion, Jefferson's masterpiece was quickly approved. Sam Adams' main purpose in life had been achieved.

After the war the fire went out of Adams' pen. Neither his talents nor his methods were any longer needed. Appointed to a committee to draft a new constitution for Massachusetts, he took little interest and the work was done entirely by cousin John. He continued to be elected to public office in Massachusetts as long as he desired it, serving as Governor for four terms, but his one great mission in life, to secure American independence, had been accomplished. Retiring from public life in January, 1797, he died October 2, 1803, at the age of 81.

Sam Adams' life was a paradox. Deeply devoted to Puritanism and the Christian religion, he nevertheless resorted to intimidation, falsity, violence, demogagic and dictator methods, anything to achieve his goal. But that goal was always a noble one. It was never for personal power or personal gain. It was always for independence and liberty for all Americans.

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